

Office of the Commissioner of Railroads

Rebuttal Testimony of Roger Schaalma of Wisconsin & Southern Railroad (WSOR)

Petition of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for the Establishment of a Public Crossing
of the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad, LLC Tracks with Wagon Trail Pathway in the City of
Madison, Dane County

Docket 9170-RX-316

April 15, 2016

1 **Q. Please state your name, business address, and occupation.**

2 A. My name is Roger Schaalma. My office is located at 1890 E. Johnson Street, Madison,
3 WI 53704. I am currently the Superintendent of Track Maintenance for the Wisconsin &
4 Southern Railroad, LLC.

5 **Q. Please identify your education, professional qualifications, and work experience.**

6 A. I have worked for the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad, LLC for 20 years. In my current
7 position as Superintendent of Track Maintenance I manage a team of 53 track
8 maintenance employees and 11 Grade Crossing Signal Maintainers. I oversee all
9 maintenance and capital expenditures for the WSOR's network including 827 public at
10 grade crossings.

11 **Q. What is the purpose of your testimony in this proceeding?**

12 A. The purpose of my testimony is to recognize the fiscal, operational & engineering
13 impacts of a new at-grade public crossing as proposed. The city proposes to construct a
14 permanent at-grade public crossing over WSOR tracks, with design and construction
15 costs being funded by city and federal and/or other sources. After construction, the future
16 maintenance and capital costs associated with maintaining a permanent public at-grade
17 crossing of this type will average approximately \$9,000 per year over a 50-year
18 timeframe. Other costs not covered by the city's funding strategy would be costs of
19 insurance and legal representations in the event of any incidents, injuries or fatalities.

1 Operationally, freight rail traffic across the nation is expected to double over the next 20-
2 25 years. Future traffic on the Cottage Grove Subdivision is no exception. Over the next
3 5 years alone, traffic is expected to increase 36% on the Cottage Grove Subdivision.
4 Current track conditions meet an FRA Class 1 standard. In 2017, the WSOR plans to
5 begin a state rehabilitation project by installing 1,200 ties per mile on the Cottage Grove
6 Subdivision bringing this entire subdivision to an FRA Class 2 standard (or 25 mph train
7 speeds). From an engineering perspective, the proposed location is on the east end of
8 curved track where we conduct frequent night time operations. The location is not
9 conducive for adequate site lines, particularly when trains are operating with head end
10 power looking east and for those trains conducting protected shoves heading east towards
11 Cottage Grove, WI.

12 It is also important to recognize there are other alternatives to a new at-grade public
13 crossing that should be considered and fully evaluated.

14 **Q. Are you sponsoring any Exhibits?**

15 A. Yes.

16 **Q. Please describe your exhibits.**

17 A. Ex. – WSOR – Schaalma-1, Estimated Repair Costs to WSOR for the Proposed Wagon
18 Trail Crossing 9170-RX-316

19 Ex. – WSOR – Schaalma-2, Parcel Map of Publicly Owned Property.

20 Ex. – WSOR – Schaalma-3, Preliminary Engineering Drawing for Vondron Siding.

21 Ex. – WSOR – Schaalma-4, Engineering Study and Report from Patrick Engineering.

22 Ex. – WSOR – Schaalma-5, WSOR's Carload Data and Service Plan for the Cottage
23 Grove Subdivision

1 **Q.** **Does this conclude your testimony?**

2 **A.** Yes, it does